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ABSTRACT

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Research Series No. 86

TEACHERS' SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH HOSTILE, AGGRESSIVE STUDENTS

Jere E. Brophy and Mary M. Rohrkemper

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Abstract

Elementary teachers' free response self reports of how they would respond to students' hostile aggressive behavior (as depicted in two written vignettes) were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for relationships to the teachers' grade level (K - 3 vs. 4 - 6), school location (Lansing vs. inner-city Detroit), and ratings by their principals and by classroom observers (on ability to cope with problem students). In general, most teachers were poorly prepared to cope with student aggressiveness, and many, especially inner-city teachers, did not wish to even try to do so, preferring instead to refer the students to the principal. Teachers rated higher in ability to cope with problem students were more likely than teachers rated lower to try to settle the incident themselves and to try to socialize the aggressive students more effectively rather than to just punish them.

TEACHERS' SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH HOSTILE AGGRESSIVE STUDENTS[1]

Jere E. Brophy and Mary M. Rohrkemper[2]

Brophy and Putnam (1979), in a review of elementary school classroom management, contrasted the literature on managing groups of students during actual instruction with the literature on coping with students who present serious and sustained problems. They concluded that recent research had produced a rich and largely consistent knowledge base identifying effective group management techniques and linking them to teacher success in maximizing student engagement in academic activities and achievement on standardized tests (cf. Anderson, Evertson, & Brophy, 1979; Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980; Good & Grouws, 1977; and Kounin, 1970). They also reported agreement across diverse sources (educational psychology, behavior modification, and psychotherapy/mental health texts) on principles for dealing with students who present serious problems.

Various authors employed different concepts and addressed different problems, but when they did overlap in discussing dealing with problem students, they usually offered similar advice. This advice typically was not based on classroom research, however. With the exception of certain applications of behavior modification principles, there has been little research on methods of dealing with problem students and, in particular, very little research focusing on techniques that may be feasible and effective for the ordinary classroom teacher (i.e., not the school psychologist or other specialist).

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[1]This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Boston, April, 1980. The authors wish to acknowledge and thank Jane Smith, Janis Elmore, Carolyn Rettke, Jean Medick, Lonnie McIntyre, Susan Rubenstein, Stephen Katz, and JoAnn Hite, who assisted in project planning and data collection, Jo Cornell, Lynn Scott, and Jane Smith, who coded the data, Suwatana Sookpokakit, who assisted with preparation and analysis, and June Smith who assisted in manuscript preparation.

[2]Jere E. Brophy is coordinator of the Classroom Strategy Study and a professor of student teaching and professional development and of counseling and educational psychology. Mary M. Rohrkemper is manager of the Classroom Strategy Study and an IRT research intern.

These issues are addressed in the Classroom Strategy Study, an investigation of teachers' thinking about and strategies for coping with 12 types of "difficult" or "problem" students often observed at the elementary level (see Figure 1). The 12 problem behavior types shown in the figure were identified as the focus for study through the following process. First, a list of approximately 75 troublesome behaviors was developed from nominations by the project staff, which included professors and graduate students in educational psychology and related disciplines, along with several elementary school teachers. The list was first winnowed through elimination of duplication, and then sharpened and elaborated using concepts and terminology borrowed from previous studies of chronic childhood problem behavior syndromes as seen by clinicians or classroom teachers (Lambert & Nicoll, 1977; Miller, 1972; Peterson, 1961; Stott, Marston, & Neill, 1975; and Werry & Quay, 1971).

The result was a list of about 20 syndromes or patterns of problem behavior, later reduced to the 12 shown in Figure 1 by eliminating several that seemed less severe or widespread than the others. The 12 patterns are defined so as to be mutually exclusive, although several could coexist in the same student (for example, short attention span/distractibility and motoric hyperactivity involve different behaviors but are often seen in the same individuals, and either or both of these could be combined with underachievement, hostile aggressive behavior, or other patterns as well). Even where multiple patterns exist in the same individual, however, the patterns are different enough to be described separately without difficulty, and it seemed likely that teachers would use different strategies to try to cope with them. Consequently, procedures were designed to deal with each problem separately. It should be noted, however, that teachers

1. Failure Syndrome. These children are convinced that they cannot do the the work. They often avoid starting or give up easily. They expect to fail, even after succeeding. Signs: easily frustrated; gives up easily, says "I can't do it."

2. Perfectionist. These children are unduly anxious about making mistakes. Their self-imposed standards are unrealistically high, so that they are never satisfied with their work (when they should be). Signs: too much of a "perfectionist"; often anxious/fearful/frustrated about quality of work; holds back from class participation unless sure of self.

3. Underachiever. These children do a minumum to just "get by." They do not value schoolwork. Signs: indifferent to school work; minimum work output; not challenged by schoolwork; poorly motivated.

4. Low Achiever. These children have difficulty, even though they may be willing to work. Their problem is low potential or lack of readiness rather than poor motivation. Signs: difficulty following directions; difficulty completing work; poor retention; progresses slowly.

5. Hostile Aggressive. These children express hostility through direct, intense behaviors. They are not easily controlled. Signs: intimidates and threatens; hits and pushes; damages property; antagonizes, hostile; easily angered.

6. Passive Aggressive. These children express opposition and resistance to the teacher, but indirectly. It often is hard to tell whether they are resisting deliberately or not. Signs: subtly oppositional and stubborn; tries to control; borderline compliance with rules; mars property rather than damages; disrupts surreptitiously; drags feet.

7. Defiant. These children resist authority and carry on a power struggle with the teacher. They want to have their way and not be told what to do. Signs: (1) resists verbally (e.g., (a) "You can't make me..."; (b) "You can't tell me what to do..."; (c) makes derogatory statements about teacher to others); (2) resists non-verbally (e.g., (a) frowns, grimaces, mimics teacher; (b) arms folded, hands on hips, foot stomping; (c) looks away when being spoken to; (d) laughs at inappropriate times; (e) may be physically violent toward teacher; (f) deliberately does what teacher says not to do).

8. Hyperactive. These children show excessive and almost constant movement, even when sitting. Often their movements appear to be without purpose. Signs: squirms, wiggles, jiggles, scratches; easily excitable; blurts out answers and comments; often out of seat; bothers other children with noises, movements; energetic but poorly directed; excessively touches objects or people.

9. Short Attention Span/Distractible. These children have short attention spans. They seem unable to sustain attention and concentration. Easily distracted by sounds, sights, or speech. Signs: has difficulty adjusting to changes; rarely completes tasks; easily distracted.

10. Immature. These children are immature. They have poorly developed emotional stability, self control, self-care abilities, social skills, and/or responsibility. Signs: often exhibits behavior normal for younger children; may cry easily; loses belongings; frequently appears helpless, incompetent, and/or dependent.

11. Rejected by Peers. These children seek peer interaction but are rejected, ignored, or excluded. Signs: forced to work and play alone; lacks social skills; often picked on or teased.

12. Shy/Withdrawn. These children avoid personal interactions, are quiet and unobtrusive, and do not respond well to others. Signs; quiet and sober; does not initiate or volunteer; does not call attention to self.

Figure 1. The 12 types of problem behavior addressed by the Classroom Strategy Study.

deal with real students, not abstract behavioral syndromes. They may worry more about peer rejection of compliant students, for example, than about peer rejection of students whose behavior is marked by defiance and hostile aggression. These and other possible interaction effects among behavior patterns that coexist in the same individuals were not addressed in the study.

The Classroom Strategy Study is not an experiment, but a large and systematic gathering of self-report data from experienced elementary teachers, selected to provide variation in grade level, types of students taught, and skill at dealing with problem students (Rohrkemper & Brophy, Note 1).

Method

Teachers

Interviews were obtained from 98 elementary school teachers distributed about evenly across grades K - 6. Of these, 54 taught in Lansing and 44 in inner-city Detroit. No more than four teachers in any given school were included. All teachers had at least three years of experience and had been nominated by their principals as either outstanding or average in ability to deal with difficult students. These 98 teachers represented about 75% of those orginally nominated; the others declined to participate. Teachers were paid for the time they spend responding to our interviews.

Data Collection

Each teacher was observed and interviewed by a project staff member, who did not know how the principal had rated the teacher. Teachers were observed for two half-days, during which the interviewers gathered general impressions of the teachers' style and level of success in managing the classroom and

dealing with problem students, the nature of the students in the class, the general classroom atmosphere, and the availability and use of other adults in the classroom. Following this, teachers were interviewed individually for an average of over four hours (range = 2 to 10 hours), spread over two or more sessions.

Interviews began with the vignettes, which were presented one at a time in the order given in Figure 2. Following the vignettes, teachers were asked to discuss their general strategies for dealing with each of the 12 problem student types described in Figure 1. They also were asked to rate their abilities to cope with each of these student types, to state the frequency with which they had encountered each type in the past three years, and to answer several questions about the schools in which they taught. The present report focuses on analyses of teachers' responses to the vignettes. Readers interested in more details about the larger study as a whole should consult Rohrkemper and Brophy (Note 1).

There were two vignettes for each of the 12 problem behavior types shown in Figure 1. During development, the vignettes were revised several times to insure that they depicted incidents that would be familiar to elementary-school teachers and would be perceived as typical of the kinds of problems presented by each of the 12 types of problem students under study. To make it easy for each teacher to visualize the events depicted in the vignette as occurring in his or her own classroom, we eliminated specific references to facilities, equipment, or individuals (school psychologists, social workers) that might be familiar to some teachers but not others.

1. Joe could be a capable student, but his self concept is so poor that he actually describes himself as stupid. He makes no serious effort to learn, shrugging off responsibility by saying that "that stuff" is too hard for him. Right now he is dawdling instead of getting started on an assignment that you know he can do. You know that if you approach him he will begin to complain that the assignment is too hard and that he can't do it.

2. This morning, several students excitedly tell you that on the way to school they saw Tom beating up Sam and taking his lunch money. Tom is the class bully and has done things like this many times.

3. Bill is an extremely active child. He seems to burst with energy, and today he is barely "keeping the lid on." This morning, the class is working on their art projects and Bill has been in and out of his seat frequently. Suddenly, Roger lets out a yell and you look up to see that Bill has knocked Roger's sculpture off his desk. Bill says he didn't mean to do it, he was just returning to his seat.

4. Mark is not well accepted by his classmates. Today he has been trying to get some of the other boys to play a particular game with him. After much pleading the boys decide to play the game, but exclude Mark. Mark argues, saying that he should get to play because it was his idea in the first place, but the boys start without him. Finally, Mark gives up and slinks off, rejected again.

5. Beth has average ability for school work, but she is so anxious about the quality of her work, that she seldom finishes an assignment because of all her "start-overs." This morning you have asked the children to make pictures to decorate the room. The time allocated to art has almost run out and Beth is far from finished with her picture. You ask her about it and find out she has "made mistakes" on the other ones and this is her third attempt at a "good picture."

6. The class is about to begin a test. The room is quiet. Just as you are about to begin speaking, Audrey opens her desk. Her notebook slides off the desk, spilling loose papers on the floor. Audrey begins gathering up the papers, slowly and deliberately. All eyes are upon her. Audrey stops, grins, and then slowly resumes gathering papers. Someone laughs. Others start talking.

7. George's attention wanders easily. Today it has been divided between the discussion and various distractions. You ask him a question, but he is distracted and doesn't hear you.

8. Linda is bright enough, but she is shy and withdrawn. She doesn't volunteer to participate in class, and when you call on her directly, she often does not respond. When she does, she usually whispers. Today, you are checking seatwork progress. When you question her, Linda keeps her eyes lowered and says nothing.

9. Carl can do good work, but he seldom does. He will try to get out of work. When you speak to him about this, he makes a show of looking serious and pledging reform, but his behavior doesn't change. Just now, you see a typical scene: Carl is making paper airplanes when he is supposed to be working.

10. Roger has been fooling around instead of working on his seatwork for several days now. Finally, you tell him that he has to finish or stay in during recess and work on it then. He says, "I won't stay in!" and spends the rest of the period talking. As the class begins to line up for recess, he quickly jumps up and heads for the door. You tell him that he has to stay inside and finish his assignment, but he just says "No, I don't!" and continues out the door to recess.

11. Betty seems younger than the other students in your class. She has difficulty getting along with them and is quick to tattle. She has just told you that she heard some of the boys use "bad words" during recess today.

12. Jeff tries hard but is the lowest achiever in the class. This week you taught an important sequence of lessons. You spent a lot of extra time with Jeff and thought he understood the material. Today you are reviewing. All the other students answer your questions with ease, but when you call on Jeff he is obviously lost.

(Continued on next page)

Figure 2. The 24 vignettes used in the Classroom Strategy Study.

(Figure 2 continued)

13. Mary has the intelligence to succeed, if she applied herself, but she is convinced that she can't handle it. She gets frustrated and disgusted very easily, and then she gives up. Instead of trying to solve the problem another way, or coming to you for help, she skips the problem and moves on. Today she brings you her assignment, claiming to be finished, but you see that she has skipped many items.

14. Class is disrupted by a scuffle. You look up to see that Ron has left his seat and gone to Phil's desk, where he is punching and shouting at Phil. Phil is not so much fighting back as trying to protect himself. You don't know how this started, but you do know that Phil gets along well with the other students but Ron often starts fights and argues without provocation.

15. Paul can't seem to keep his hands off of the things and people in the room. He also seems to want to inspect or play with whatever is at hand. When he is not physically manipulating someone or something else, he hums, whistles, grimaces, drums his fingers, taps his feet, or makes other noises through physical activity. Just now he has discovered that one of the screws holding the back of his chair to its frame is loose, and he is pushing and pulling at the loose piece. In the process, he is further loosening the connection and at the same time distracting the class with the noise he is making.

16. Kathy is a loner in the classroom and an onlooker on the playground. No one willingly sits with her or plays with her. You divided the class into groups to work on projects, and those in Kathy's group are making unkind remarks about her, loud enough for all to hear.

17. Chris is a capable student who is exceptionally anxious about making mistakes. He doesn't contribute to class discussions or recitation unless he is absolutely sure he is right. You recognize his anxiety and try to call on him only when you are reasonably sure he can handle it. When you do this today, he blanches and stumbles through an incorrect answer. He is clearly upset.

18. The class has just been given instructions to line up quickly. The students comply, with the exception of Jack, who is always the last to follow directions. Jack remains at his desk, working on a drawing. He looks up, in the direction of the line, then resumes work on his drawing.

19. Sarah never seems to finish an assignment. She is easily distracted, and then isn't able to recapture what she had been thinking about before the interruption. You distribute a work sheet to the class, and the students, including Sarah, begin their work. After a couple of minutes you see that Sarah is looking out the window, distracted again.

20. John often seems to be off in his own world, but today he is watching you as you lead a discussion. Pleased to see him attentive, you ask him what he thinks. However, you have to repeat his name and he looks startled when he realizes that you have called on him. Meanwhile, you realize that he has been immersed in daydreams and only appeared to be paying attention.

21. Nancy is oriented toward peers and social relationships, not school work. She could be doing top grade work, but instead she does just enough to get by. She is often chatting or writing notes when she is supposed to be paying attention or working. During today's lesson, she has repeatedly turned to students on each side of her to make remarks, and now she has a conversation going with several friends.

22. Squirt guns are not permitted in school. Scott has been squirting other students with his squirt gun. You tell him to bring the squirt gun to you. He refuses, saying that it is his and you have no right to it. You insist, but he remains defiant and starts to become upset. Judging from his past and present behavior, he is not going to surrender the squirt gun voluntarily.

23. Greg often loses his belongings, becomes upset, whines, and badgers you to help him. Now he has misplaced his hat, and he is pestering you again. Other students smirk and make remarks about this, and Greg becomes upset.

24. Tim is a poor student. He has a low potential for school work and also lacks the basic experiences that help a child function in the classroom. You have just presented a new lesson to the class and have assigned related seatwork. You look over the class and see that Tim is upset. When you ask him if something is wrong, he tells you that he can't do it -- it's too hard.

In order to avoid confounding the behavior depicted in the vignettes with various status characteristics of students, we avoided mention of age, race, ethnicity, or social class, and eliminated clues (direct quotes or other language data, pictures or drawings, and the like) that might suggest these characteristics. Students were identified by sex through their names, because we felt that this was necessary for realism. Only male names were assigned to behavior patterns identified primarily with males (hyperactivity, hostile aggressive behavior), but both male and female names were assigned to behavior patterns that are less sex typed (failure syndrome, passive aggressive). The incident depicted in each vignette is presented as only the latest in a series of similar incidents involving the same student. Thus, the incident is placed in a context of chronic problem behavior as defined by the patterns given in Figure 1.

Teachers were asked to read each vignette and respond as if the situation had occurred in their classroom. Specifically, they were asked to state what they would say and do, to tell why they would say and do it, and to describe the student in the vignette in their own words. These data simulate teachers' responses to actual classroom incidents in which there are real consequences for themselves, for the student engaging in the problem behavior, and for all the students in the class, who witness the event and experience its effects vicariously.

Coding

Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed, and then coded with a variety of instruments that included categories drawn from both empirical content analysis and theoretical sources.

The unique coding systems are tailored to the specifics of each vignette, but they have certain general features in common. In particular, they make a distinction between the teachers' handling of what we consider to be basic tasks versus the teachers' inclusion of response elements we consider to be optional or matters of personal style. The things included under basic tasks are those we consider necessary for an adequate response to the problem.

In Vignette 2, these include dealing with Sam's needs (Sam has already been attacked and had his lunch money stolen, and he may have reason to fear additional attack after school if he responds freely to the teacher's questions about what happened), seeking clarification about exactly what happened, responding to Tom and resolving the situation if Tom refuses to admit that he has the money, and attempting to socialize Tom to avoid such behavior in the future. Basic tasks for Vignette 14 include stopping the fight quickly to avoid injury to either boy, gathering information to establish exactly what happened, taking action to see that the incident itself is settled, and attempting to socialize Ron to avoid similar problems in the future. The teachers' responses to these vignettes were coded for the degree to which they seemed aware of and verbalized some kind of response to each one of these basic tasks, and the responses they verbalized were categorized.

A variety of information was coded in addition to teachers' handling of these basic tasks. One of these was mention of long-term follow-up activity beyond what the teachers would do in the immediate situation. For incidents as serious as those depicted in these vignettes dealing with aggression, it could be argued that follow up should be considered a basic task.

However, our instructions to the teachers stressed describing how they would respond to the immediate situation only. Teachers who mentioned follow-up activities did so at their own initiation, and not in response to our questions. Many teachers gave very impressive responses concerning how they would handle the immediate situation and presumably could have discussed follow-up options if we had asked about them specifically, but we did not, and it seems inappropriate to penalize them, in effect, by treating the follow-up as a basic task for dealing with the problem depicted in the vignette.

Other optional or stylistic variables coded for both of these vignettes concerned whether or not the teachers held a discussion with either or both boys and, if so, whether they took pains to hold this discussion privately or not, whether they talked with the aggressor or the other boy first, whether they were concerned about getting the class settled down before initiating such discussion, and whether they saw the boys separately or together. Other variables coded for both vignettes included the degree to which the teacher used or threatened punishment, the degree to which the aggressor was held personally responsible for his behavior, and whether the teacher tried to support the self concept of the aggressor by implying that the behavior was a situational aberration (vs. attacking the self concept by implying that the behavior is typical of him and represents a serious character defect).

Other information coded was unique to one of the vignettes. In Vignette 2, this included several options concerning how the teacher might deal with Sam's needs, whether classmates who witnessed the incident would be brought into the discussion, and how the problem of the missing money would be handled. In particular, some teachers mentioned that it would be unwise to order Tom to return the money directly to Sam, because this might cause problems to flare up

again (therefore, they would get the money from Tom themselves and return it to Sam later). Unique aspects coded in responses to Vignette 14 included the teacher's plan for finding out exactly what caused the incident and for resolving the problem, the method the teacher would use to stop the fight, and whether the teacher would invoke some kind of automatic response rule or mechanism in dealing with the problem rather than attempting to formulate a response tailored to the specifics of the situation (this code was added because we discovered that the Detroit schools have a firm rule requiring teachers to report incidents of violence and calling for penalties against teachers who fail to do so).

The unique coding systems, like the other systems used in this study, represent a combination of theoretical and empirical derivation of variable definitions and measurement methods. Ideas about appropriate handling of the problems depicted in the vignettes were gathered and synthesized from sources such as Dreikurs, Redl, Glasser, and Gordon, as well as a variety of texts in educational psychology and classroom management. In addition, content analyses of subsamples of 15 responses to each vignette were used to identify the kinds of issues addressed by the teachers and the alternative strategies mentioned for handling them. Alternatives that seemed likely to appear often enough to be worth coding systematically were then included in the coding systems. After piloting and refinement on the subsample of cases, the systems were used to code the rest of the cases. Each response was coded independently by two coders, with disagreements resolved by discussion (including input from a third coder when necessary). Coders were unaware of how the teachers had been classified by their principals or rated by our observers. Analyses of intercoder agreement yielded overall average agreement percentages (number of agreements divided by itself plus the number of disagreements plus the number of codes made by one coder but not the other) of 75% for Vignette 2 and 70% for Vignette 14. The coding systems for Vignette 2 and Vignette 14 are available on request from the authors.

Results

The results to be reported here include distribution data on use of the categories in the two unique coding systems (Tables 1-4) and correlations between use of these categories and teacher status on 11 classifying variables (Tables 5 and 6).

1. Grade level (K-3 vs. 4-6).
2. Teacher sex.
3. Location (Lansing vs. inner-city Detroit).
4. Role Perception (teacher's preferred emphasis is on instruction vs. socialization).
5. Principal's Classification (nomination of teacher as either average or outstanding at dealing with problem students).
6. Observer's Classification (5-point rating of teacher's ability to deal with problem students).
7. Ability Type Score (1 = classified average by principal and rated low by observer; 2 = classified high by principal but rated low by observer; 3 = rated average by observer; 4 = classified as average by principal but rated high by observer; 5 = classified as high by principal and rated high by observer).
8. Instruction and Management Factor (factor score developed from several ratings of teachers' instructional and classroom management skills).
9. Warmth Factor (factor score developed from several ratings of teacher's warmth and likeability).
10. Noise and Activity Tolerance Factor (factor score derived from observer's ratings of individualization of instruction and tolerance for noise and activity).
11. Teacher Self-Ratings Factor (factor score derived from teacher's self-ratings of ability to deal with problem students).

Two decision rules were used in selecting correlations to discuss in this report. First, using the distribution information in Tables 1 and 3, we identified and eliminated from further analyses those variables that did not show enough variance to allow meaningful interpretation. These were variables on which the great majority of teachers who had codable data were scored in just one of the two possible alternatives ("present" or "absent"), and only a few teachers were scored in the other alternative. Variables are discussed in the present report only when

at least five teachers were represented in the less popular category. Variables that were eliminated through this decision rule are marked with asterisks on Tables 1 and 3.

Table 1.
Distribution Data from the Unique
Coding for Vignette Number 2

Variable		0	1	No Data
A0	No help for Sam	49	41	8
A1	Lunch/Money for Sam	43	47	8
A2	Reassure Sam	77	13	8
A3	Other help for Sam	88	2	8*
B0	Does not seek information	62	31	5
B1	Verifies only (from Sam)	89	4	5*
B2	Lets Tom tell his story	52	41	5
B3	Suspends judgment/hears both sides	76	17	5
C0	No action if Tom denies guilt	36	1	61*
C1	Assumes Tom's guilt	14	23	61
C2	Sends Tom to principal	23	4	61
C3	Other response following denial	26	11	61
D0	No attempt to socialize Tom	89	1	8*
D1	Golden Rule/empathy	69	21	8
D2	Moralizing/berating.	72	18	8
D3	Instruction	64	26	8
D4	Punish/inform parents	28	62	8
D5	Other socialization of Tom	74	16	8
G0	No follow up	36	62	-
G1	Tries to address unmet needs	80	18	-
G2	Class meeting/magic circle	93	5	-
G3	Other follow up	81	17	-

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 1 continued)

Variable		0	1	No Data
H1	Tom returns money to Sam	7	22	69
H2	Tom returns money to teacher	22	7	69
I1	No concern about settling the class	74	24	-
J1	Stresses need for privacy	40	46	12
K1	Talks to Tom first	16	50	32
L1	Boys seen separately only	37	37	24
L2	Separately first, then together	62	12	24
L3	Boys seen together only	57	17	24
L4	Together first, then Tom alone	66	8	24
M1	No threats or punishment	68	23	7
M2	Threatens to punish any repetition	79	12	7
M3	Punishes now	31	60	7
N1	Tom is fully responsible	3	50	45*
N2	There were mitigating circumstances	51	2	45*
N3	Tom is minimally responsible	52	1	45*
O1	Problem described as situational	21	11	66

*These variables will be dropped from further analyses because of insufficient variance to yield meaningful correlations or group comparisons (fewer than 5 teachers were coded for the alternative used less frequently).

Table 2.

Distribution Data from the Unique Coding for Vignette Number 14

Variable		0	1	No Data
A1	Concern about injuries	26	42	40
B0	Does not seek information	60	26	12
B1	Verifies only (from Phil)	86	0	12*
B2	Lets Ron tell his story	67	19	12
B3	Suspends judgment/hears both sides	45	41	12
C0	Fails to settle the incident	75	19	4
C1	Speaks to both boys privately	51	43	4
C2	Tries to protect Phil	65	28	4
C3	Has boys fight it out	90	4	4*
C4	Has boys talk it out	74	20	4
C5	Demands apology/restitution	87	7	4
C6	Other resolution of the incident	85	9	4
D0	No attempt to socialize Ron	80	9	9
D1	Golden Rule/empathy	82	7	9
D2	Moralizing/lecturing	62	27	9
D3	Instruction	58	31	9
D4	Punish/inform parents	46	43	9
D5	Tells Ron to depend on teacher	72	17	9
D6	Other socialization of Ron	74	15	9
G0	No follow up	47	50	3
G1	Tries to address unmet needs	86	11	3
G2	Peers/meeting/Magic Circle	93	4	1*
G3	Teach control/coping skills	77	20	1

(Table 2 continued on next page)

(Table 2 continued)

Variable	0	1	No Data
G4 Other follow up	71	26	1
H2 Stops fight physically	16	53	29
I1 Concern about settling the class	82	15	1
J1 Stresses need for privacy	41	50	7
K1 Talks to Ron first	15	44	39
L1 Boys seen separately only	55	22	21
L2 Separately, then together	70	7	21
L3 Boys seen together only	41	36	21
L4 Together first, then Ron alone	65	12	21
M1 No threats or punishment	48	42	8
M2 Threatens to punish any repetition	77	13	8
M3 Punishes now	52	37	9
N1 Tom is fully responsible	9	67	22
N2 There were mitigating circumstances	71	5	22
N3 Tom is minimally responsible	72	4	22*
O1 Problem described as situational	52	25	21
P1 Invokes automatic reaction rule	78	19	1
Q1 Changing Ron is goal	28	69	1
R0 No attempt to socialize Ron	82	12	4
R1 Goal is suppression of aggression	33	61	4
R2 Goal is temper control	84	10	4
R3 Goal is acceptable anger release	89	5	4
R4 Goal is better coping skills	72	22	4
R5 Goal is empathy/Golden Rule	85	9	4
R6 Other goals	77	17	4

* These variables will be dropped from further analyses because of insufficient variance to yield meaningful correlations or group comparisons (fewer than 5 teachers were coded for the alternative used less frequently).

Table 3.

Means and Standard Deviations for the Summary and Proportion Scores from the Unique Coding for Vignette Number 2.

Variable		Mean	SD
E	Basic tasks addressed	3.24	.77
F	Basic task categories used	4.05	1.40
Sum A	Dealing with Sam's needs	.69	.71
Sum C	Responding when Tom denies guilt	1.30	.62
Sum D	Socializing when Tom admits guilt	1.59	.78
Sum G	Follow up	.41	.57
Proportion L	Sees the boys separately	.66	.48

Explanation of sum and proportion scores:

Sum A, Sum C, Sum D, Sum G — These are sum scores indicating the number of times the teacher was coded "present" rather than "absent" for subcategories A1 - A3, C1 - C3, D1 - D5, and G1 - G5, respectively. High scores reflect multiple coding within the A,C,D, and G categories.

E — This is the number of basic task categories (A,B,C, and D) in which the teacher was coded "present" in at least one subcategory other than A0, B0, C0, or D0, respectively.

F — This is the sum of basic task subcategories, other than A0, B0, C0, or D0, for which the teacher was coded "present". High scores reflect multiple coding within subcategories A1-A3, B1-B3, C1-C3, and D1-D5.

Proportion L = L1 + L2/L1 + L2 + L3 + L4.

Table 4.

Means and Standard Deviations for the Summary and Proportion Scores from the Unique Coding for Vignette Number 14.

Variable		Mean	SD
E	Basic tasks addressed	3.16	1.08
F	Basic task categories used	4.12	1.66
Proportion C	Attempts to solve through talk	.50	.46
Sum C	Settling the incident	1.18	.83
Sum D	Socializing Ron	1.57	.94
Sum G	Follow up	.63	.77
Proportion L	Sees the boys separately	.38	.49
Sum R	Goals	1.32	.85

Explanation of Sum and Proportion Scores:

E This is the number of basic task categories (A,B,C, and D) in which the teacher was coded "present" in at least one subcategory other than A0, B0, C0, or D0, respectively.

F This is the sum of basic task subcategories, other than A0, B0, C0, or D0, for which the teacher was coded "present." High scores reflect multiple coding within subcategories A1, B1 - B3, C1 - C6, and D1 - D6.

Sum C, Sum D, Sum G, Sum R: These are sum scores indicating the number of times the teacher was coded "present" rather than "absent" for subcategories C1 - C6, D1 - D6, G1 - G4, and R1 - R6, respectively. High scores reflect multiple coding within the C, D, G, and R categories.

Proportion C = C1 + C4/C1 + C2 + C3 + C4 + C5

Proportion L = L1 + L2/L1 + L2 + L3 + L4

Table 5.

Correlations of Coding Variables from the Unique Coding for Vignette Number 2 with Teacher Classifying Variables.[1]

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Learning	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self Ratings Factor
A0 No help for Sam				.35							
A1 Lunch/Money for Sam				-.31							
A2 Reassure Sam				-.18	.28						
B0 Does not seek information				.26							
B2 Lets Tom tell his story				-.25		.23	.26	.26	.21		
B3 Suspends judgment/ hears both sides		-.17									
C1 Assumes Tom's guilt							.31				

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 5 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
C2 Sends Tom to principal											
C3 Other response following denial										.27	
D1 Golden Rule/empathy	-.20										
D2 Moralizing/berating					.21						
D3 Instruction				-.24	.18						
D4 Punish/inform parents				.28							
D5 Other socialization of Tom				-.19							
G0 No follow up											
G1 Tries to address unmet needs											
G2 Class meeting/ magic circle											
G3 Other follow up							.22	.18			

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 5 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
H1 Tom returns money to Sam			-.38	.35							
H2 Tom returns money to teacher			.38	-.35							
I1 No concern about settling the class			.25								
J1 Stresses need for privacy				-.20					-.17		
K1 Talks to Tom first											
L1 Boys seen separately only		-.21									
L2 Separately first, then together		.21		-.19							
L3 Boys seen together only								-.33			
L4 Together first, then Tom alone								.22			

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 5 continued)

	Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
M1	No threats or punishment				-.36						.18	
M2	Threatens to punish any repetition											
M3	Punishes now				.31					-.17	-.20	
N1	Tom is fully responsible					.28					-.22	.23
O1	Problem is described as situational											.52
E	Basic tasks addressed				-.36							
F	Basic task categories used	-.17			-.34	.20					.18	
Sum A	Dealing with Sam's needs				-.33	.19						

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 5 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Rating Factor
Sum C Responding when Tom denies guilt											
Sum D Socializing when Tom admits guilt	-.22				.23						
Sum G Follow up	-.16										
Proportion L Sees the boys separately											

[1]All correlations included are significant at or below the .05 level of probability

(Table continued on next page)

Table 6.

Correlations of Coding Variables from the Unique Coding for Vignette Number 14 with Teacher Classifying Variables.[1]

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
A1 Concern about injuries				.23				.22			
B0 Does not seek information		-.30									
B2 Lets Ron tell his story		.24		.20		.18			.19		-.20
B3 Suspends judgment/hears both sides				-.25							
C0 Fails to settle the incident			.22	.19	-.19					-.22	
C1 Speaks to both boys privately	-.26			-.18							-.18
C2 Tries to protect Phil											
C4 Has boys talk it out				-.26			.21				
C5 Demands apology/restitution											
C6 Other resolution of the incident						-.19	-.21		-.20		

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
D0 No attempt to socialize Ron											.17
D1 Golden Rule/empathy											
D2 Moralizing/lecturing											
D3 Instruction				-.25							
D4 Punish/inform parents				.35	-.24					-.21	
D5 Tells Ron to depend on teacher								.20			
D6 Other socialization of Ron	-.28		.22	-.21						.18	
G0 No follow up											
G1 Tries to address unmet needs					-.17			-.18			

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
D0 No attempt to socialize Ron											.17
D1 Golden Rule/empathy											
D2 Moralizing/lecturing											
D3 Instruction				-.25							
D4 Punish/inform parents				.35	-.24					-.21	
D5 Tells Ron to depend on teacher								.20			
D6 Other socialization of Ron	-.28		.22	-.21						.18	
G0 No follow up											
G1 Tries to address unmet needs					-.17			-.18			

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
D0 No attempt to socialize Ron											.17
D1 Golden Rule/empathy											
D2 Moralizing/lecturing											
D3 Instruction				-.25							
D4 Punish/inform parents				.35	-.24					-.21	
D5 Tells Ron to depend on teacher								.20			
D6 Other socialization of Ron	-.28		.22	-.21						.18	
G0 No follow up											
G1 Tries to address unmet needs					-.17			-.18			

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

	Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
G3	Teach control/coping skills	-.24				.20						
G4	Other follow up											
H2	Stops fight physically											
I1	Concern about settling class											
J1	Stresses need for privacy				-.26							
K1	Talks to Ron first											
L1	Boys seen separately	-.20										
L2	Separately, then together											
L3	Boys seen together only	.43			.24							.26
L4	Together first, then Ron alone	-.23	.20		-.19							

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
M1 No threats or punishment				-.35	.18		.22		.18	.26	
M2 Threatens to punish any repetition											
M3 Punishes now				.40	-.21					-.31	
N1 Ron is fully responsible											
O1 Problem described as situational				-.30							
P1 Invokes automatic reaction rule		-.18		.29	-.19						
Q1 Changing Ron is goal					.19			.18	.17		-.17

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
R0 No attempt to socialize Ron											
R1 Goal is suppression of aggression	.29	-.29									
R2 Goal is temper control					.21						
R3 Goal is acceptable anger release				-.21							
R4 Goal is better coping skills											
R5 Goal is empathy Golden Rule						-.19					
R6 Other goals							-.17				

(Table continued on next page)

(Table 6 continued)

Coding Variables	Grade Level	Teacher Sex	Socialization Role Emphasis	Location in Lansing	Principal's Classification	Observer's Classification	Ability Type Score	Instructional Management Factor	Warmth Factor	Noise and Activity Tolerance	Self-Ratings Factor
E Basic tasks addressed		.19								.20	
F Basic task categories used				-.19						.18	
Proportion C Attempts to solve through talk				-.30							
Sum C Settling the incident				-.22							-.18
Sum D Socializing Ron											
Sum G Follow up	-.18										
Proportion L See the boys separately	-.27										
Sum R Goals											

*These variables will be dropped from further analyses because of insufficient variance to yield meaningful correlations or group comparisons (fewer than 5 teachers were coded for the alternative used less frequently).

(Table continued on next page)

The second decision rule concerns the probability levels associated with correlations; discussion is confined to correlations significant at or below the .05 level of significance.

Frequency of Category Use

Tables 1 and 3 show the frequency of category use across the sample of 98 teachers as a whole. Tables 2 and 4 present data from summary and proportion scores reflecting patterns of usage of some of these categories in combination. Taken together, these data reveal certain general trends as well as numerous areas of teacher disagreement about how to handle the problems depicted in the vignettes.

In Vignette 2, only about 60% of the teachers indicated awareness that Sam needed some attention and help. Of these, the majority confined their response to returning his lunch money or seeing that he got his lunch. Only 13 teachers mentioned trying to protect Sam or reassure him that the situation would not recur. Thus, the first basic task for this vignette was not handled well by the teachers as a group.

Nor was the second. One-third of the teachers stated that they would act directly on the (hearsay) information they received from other students, without attempting to verify or investigate first. Of the 62 teachers who would seek additional information, four would merely seek verification from Sam, 41 would let Tom tell his story even though they assumed his guilt, and only 17 would suspend judgment until they heard both sides. (Assuming Tom's guilt unless confronted with a very convincing explanation might be defensible here, given the elements built into the vignette.)

The third basic task concerned dealing with Tom if he should refuse to admit guilt. Only 37 of the 98 teachers recognized and dealt with this possibility.

Of these, the majority would either bring in witnesses to break down Tom's story or send him to the principal or counselor. Only one teacher advocated dropping the matter entirely at this point for lack of reliable information.

The fourth basic task for Vignette 2 concerns socializing Tom in an attempt to prevent recurrence of the problem. All but one teacher mentioned at least one socialization method that they would try, and many mentioned several. The most popular response (mentioned by 62 teachers) was to punish Tom in some way and/or inform his parents about the incident. Nonpunitive socialization attempts included instruction in techniques of temper control and coping with conflict (26 teachers), attempting to induce empathy with the victim through Golden-Rule reasoning and questions (21 teachers), and moralizing to or berating Tom (18 teachers).

Taken together, data for Vignette 2 suggest that most teachers are not well prepared to deal with such incidents. Many of the teachers we interviewed were aware of this, but relatively few of them were concerned enough to seek more information or training through reading, graduate work, or inservice workshops. Many stated that dealing with incidents of violence, especially if they occurred outside the classroom, was not part of a teacher's job.

Other data from Vignette 2 indicated the following. Only 36 of the 98 teachers mentioned a follow-up to the incident, and half of these assumed that Tom had important needs that were not being met and indicated that they would investigate to find out what these needs were and what they could do to change the situation. These teachers typically would contact the parents and bring them in on the situation, but clearly as sources of information and partners in problem solving rather than agents of punishment.

Of the teachers who discussed the returning of the money by Tom, three-fourths would have him give the money to them and only one-fourth would have him give it directly to Sam. This seems like a wise policy that would make it difficult for Tom to repress his responsibility for the incident by blaming Sam for his problems.

Only 24 of the 98 teachers expressed concern about settling down the class before dealing with the incident, but a majority mentioned the importance of dealing with the boys in private where the other students could not hear. Three-fourths of the teachers who were codable on the issue stated that they would talk to Tom first, not Sam. The majority stated that they would talk to the boys separately, at least at first. Most teachers would hold Tom fully responsible for his behavior. In fact, only three teachers mentioned the possibility of mitigating circumstances or other factors that would minimize Tom's responsibility. No doubt this is connected with the fact that most teachers would punish Tom for this incident or at least threaten punishment if there is further trouble. Of the teachers who could be coded for the expectations they projected to Tom, two-thirds would blame him and indicate that they considered aggression to be a stable defect in his character, and only one-third would try to support a positive self-concept by discussing the incident as a mistake or temporary loss of judgment.

Responses to Vignette 14 differed in detail, but the general trends are similar to those for Vignette 2. Just as many teachers did not indicate concern about Sam in the other vignette, many teachers did not indicate concern about stopping the fight quickly and preventing injuries to the boys in this vignette.

A higher percentage of the teachers mentioned getting information about what led to the fight before attempting to resolve the incident, but over 30% would take action without gathering this information.

In contrast to Vignette 2, almost half of the teachers who were coded stated that they would hear both sides and suspend judgment about responsibility for the fight. Thus a fight was seen as more ambiguous with regard to blame or responsibility than an incident involving a beating and taking of lunch money, even when one of the boys involved had a good reputation and one had a bad one.

About 80% of the teachers recognized that the incident had to be settled and mentioned taking some action to try to do so. Typically this involved either talking to the boys in a conference or talking to Ron alone and attempting to get him to curb his aggression through appeals, threats, or reasoning. However, another 30% of the teachers did not really try to change Ron but instead confined themselves to protecting Phil by moving him away from Ron, removing Ron from the class, warning Ron against further bullying, or taking other action geared to insure Phil's safety. Presumably these teachers had no confidence in their ability to reach Ron through persuasion or in Ron's own ability to control himself. Only seven teachers mentioned attempting to get Ron (or both boys) to apologize.

All but nine teachers went beyond settling the immediate incident by attempting to socialize Ron or to take actions to see that similar problems did not recur. Almost half of these mentioned punishing Ron and/or informing his parents. Attempting to reach him through moralizing or lecturing and attempting to instruct him in temper control and coping skills were mentioned by about a third of the teachers. Smaller percentages mentioned attempting to induce

empathy or Golden-Rule morality, or asking the students to inform them (the teachers) when conflicts arose in the future so that the teachers could handle the conflicts.

Taken together, the data on basic tasks for Vignette 14 indicate somewhat more impressive responses to the fight than to the incident depicted in Vignette 2, but still the data are not very impressive concerning teachers' readiness to handle such problems.

Other data indicate that more than half of the teachers would follow up the incident in some way. Often this involved referral to a counselor or a social worker, although many teachers mentioned things that they would do such as work with Ron to help him learn to control his temper or resolve conflicts constructively, or try to find out why he behaves as he does and improve his general life situation.

About three-fourths of the teachers who described breaking up the fight stated that they would do it physically rather than only verbally. Only a minority were concerned about settling down the class before dealing with the incident, and a small majority stressed the importance of privacy when discussing the matter with the two boys. Three-fourths stated that they would talk to Ron first. In contrast to the previous vignette, the majority of teachers discussing this vignette indicated that they would see the boys together rather than separately. Along with the data on withholding judgment concerning responsibility, this again indicates that a fight, even a one-sided one between the class bully and a boy who usually does not get into trouble, is seen as a shared incident rather than as something that one boy is doing to the other.

Even so, all but nine teachers would hold Ron fully responsible for his

behavior, although only a minority would punish him. A third of the teachers would treat the incident as situational in their discussions with Ron. In general, the teachers' responses to this vignette suggest a tendency to look upon the fight as a self-contained incident, even though Ron is described in the vignette as the class bully who regularly does things like this.

About 20% of the teachers would invoke automatic rules or mechanisms, stating that whenever there was a fight they automatically called the parents, invoked suspension, or sent the students to the principal.

About 70% of the teachers included changing Ron as a goal. Many of these confined themselves to attempts to suppress Ron's aggression through personal appeal, rule statements, warnings, or punishment. However, 22 teachers mentioned attempting to help him learn better coping skills, 10 mentioned helping him learn to control his temper, nine mentioned attempting to instill empathy or Golden-Rule morality, five mentioned suggesting acceptable methods of releasing anger against inanimate objects, and 17 mentioned various other approaches.

Group Comparisons

Our general expectations about group differences in these data were that classifications and ratings of teacher ability by the principals and by our own observers would show the most frequent and strongest correlations with coding variables, and that grade level, sex of teacher, location, teachers' role perception, and teachers' self-ratings would show fewer and weaker relationships. This typically has been the case with our universal systems, but the data from these two unique systems dealing with incidents of aggression indicate that location is by far the strongest correlate among the classifying variables. The 54 teachers from Lansing differed systematically (and similarly) from the 44 teachers in inner-city Detroit in their responses to these two vignettes.

Correlations with location reached significance on 17 of the 39 variables analyzed for Vignette 2 (see Table 5), and for 21 of the 52 variables analyzed for Vignette 14 (see Table 6). Both sets of data indicated that the inner-city Detroit teachers would minimize both their response to the immediate situation and any tendency to follow it up later. They were likely to deny their responsibility for handling such problems and to invoke automatic mechanisms or refer the boys to the principal for action. In the immediate situation, they usually would see both boys together and handle the problem only to the extent of suppressing or punishing unacceptable behavior. Typically there was no real investigation or settlement of the incident.

In contrast, the Lansing teachers were more likely to assume personal responsibility for investigating and dealing with the incident and following up with appropriate behavior later where necessary. They showed more concern about Sam and Phil, the two victims in the vignettes, as well as more inclination to try to change Tom and Ron, the aggressors. They typically would try to settle the immediate incident by investigating it in detail and then talking it out to the point where further trouble was unlikely to erupt later. Frequently, they would follow up the incident with socialization attempts involving providing instruction or help to the aggressive boy designed to teach him to curb his temper or cope more acceptably with conflict. Often they would involve parents or resources such as counselors or social workers, but typically in an attempt to solve the problem constructively rather than merely to punish. In general, the differences between the Lansing teachers and the Detroit teachers were differences that we expected to see between the teachers rated high versus those rated low. This raises two problems for us.

First, we need to find out why these differences exist. One probable factor is that Detroit is a much larger system that involves more bureaucracy. The Detroit teachers seem to be encouraged and in some cases required to respond to serious disciplinary problems "by the book," which often means notifying higher authorities and turning the problem over to them. Another possible factor is a general difference in teacher exposure to information and training in human development, classroom management, conflict resolution, and related topics. The large university presence and influence in Lansing may play a role here. These and other factors will be investigated by analyzing the interview data we have collected from the teachers on their preservice and inservice educational experiences, the kinds of resources available to them through the school system, and other matters.

The second problem raised for us by this unanticipated large difference related to teacher location is the effect that it has on our other analyses. So much of the variance in our measures is related to location, that variance related to our other classifying variables is difficult to demonstrate with correlations or other analyses based on the sample of 98 teachers as a whole. We will have to conduct additional analyses within the two location subsamples to supplement the data reported here based on the whole sample.

As it is, the correlations with ability classifications and ratings are limited in size and significance level, but in the expected directions. The principal's classification showed seven significant correlations with the codes from Vignette 2, and 9 with the codes from Vignette 14. These indicate that, compared to the teachers classified as average in dealing with problem students, those classified as outstanding are more likely to settle the immediate incident and to try to change the aggressive student through socialization activities and

follow up. Even though they tend to hold the aggressive student responsible for his behavior, they are less likely to rely on punishment and more likely to try to instruct him in temper control and coping skills.

The observers' classification yielded only one significant correlation for Vignette 2, and only three for Vignette 14. This is in contrast to our findings for universal systems, where observer data usually show more significant correlations than the principal's classification does. Perhaps the correlations within the Lansing and Detroit samples will reveal more relationships here. In any case, the present findings are at chance level and reveal only that the highly rated teachers are more likely to listen to aggressors telling their side of an incident than to simply blame them without giving them a chance to speak.

The ability type scores based on a combination of the principal's and the observer's classification, and the factor scores based on observers' classroom observation ratings, typically show four or five significant correlations each. Again, these indicate that the higher rated teachers are likely to allow the aggressors to tell their story before taking action, likely to hold them responsible for their behavior, but also likely to try to change their behavior through positive problem solving and socialization methods rather than punishment.

In general, then, the data on teacher abilities to deal with problem students indicate patterns of correlation predictable from sources of advice about classroom management and mental health. These patterns may be elaborated when correlations are computed within the Lansing and Detroit subsamples.

The grade-level data revealed four significant relationships for Vignette 2, and 9 for Vignette 14. These differences indicate that teachers in the lower grades are much more likely to try to socialize the aggressors and to follow up the incident with referral or assistance than the teachers in the higher grades are (cf. the findings of Rohrkemper & Brophy, Note 1), and

that encouragement and socialization attempts (as well as rewards) tend to drop out in the upper grades. The general picture is that the upper grades become much more academic in focus, as teachers place more emphasis on instruction and less on socialization. Students who do not conform in the upper grades are more likely to be treated through bureaucratic measures designed to force them to conform than they are to be given patient and therapeutic assistance by their teachers.

The data on teacher sex produced fewer but parallel findings, suggesting that female teachers were more likely than male teachers to attempt to socialize the culprits than rely merely on suppression and punishment. It remains to be seen whether this set of findings is actually related to teacher sex or instead is merely a matter of grade level; there were no male teachers in the early grades. Follow-up analyses done within just the higher grades will address this issue.

The correlations with teacher role perceptions were only at chance expectancy levels and did not form an interpretable pattern. The same was true for correlations with the factor representing teacher self-ratings. (This is part of a general finding to date in our study, indicating that teacher self-ratings do not correlate consistently with other measures.)

Discussion

The data suggest that these teachers, as a group, were not well prepared for coping effectively with incidents of aggression among their students, even though the teachers all had at least three years of experience and had been nominated by their principals as at least average in ability to deal with problem students. Many teachers, especially in inner-city Detroit, seemed unwilling, let alone unable, to handle these problems, preferring instead to refer them to the principal.

Among the teachers who did try to handle the problems, the majority confined themselves to control and punishment strategies. Only small minorities seemed sensitive to the needs of the victims of aggression or to the problem of insuring that aggression did not break out again later. Teachers who went beyond control or punishment strategies to try to solve the aggressors' problems or change their behavior suggested general counseling and conflict resolution strategies along the lines typically suggested in sources of advice on classroom management and educational psychology. Usually, even these teachers spoke from experience and in non-technical language, however. In general, few teachers had had systematic training in counseling or conflict resolution techniques.

The differences between teachers classified as outstanding at dealing with problem students and teachers classified as merely average in this regard were weak, but in the directions expected. However, much of the variance in teachers' reported problem-solving strategies was related to location: There were large and systematic differences between teachers in Lansing and teachers in inner-city Detroit. Possible reasons for and implications of these differences will be addressed in our continuing analyses of data from the Classroom Strategy Study.

Pending completion of these analyses, the present data should *not* be taken to imply that the Lansing teachers were in any general sense "better" than the inner-city Detroit teachers at dealing with problem students. It often happens that common practice that is contrary to theory or even (apparent) common sense turns out to be appropriate or effective upon closer analysis, and this may be true here. That is, the methods favored by the inner-city Detroit teachers may be adaptive, at least with respect to what reasonably can be accomplished given the constraints within which they work.

In conclusion, the present data based on the sample of 98 teachers as a whole provide some indication of the central tendencies and the degrees and types of variation observable in experienced elementary teachers' strategies for dealing with incidents of student aggression against peers. They also indicate some systematic variations on these general trends within subgroups of teachers who differ in sex, grade level, geographical location, role definition, and ratings of effectiveness. However, the relative effectiveness of various strategies, either in general or for specific types of students or situations, remains to be established.

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